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# A CENTURY OF MISSIONS

IN THE

## Reformed Church in America

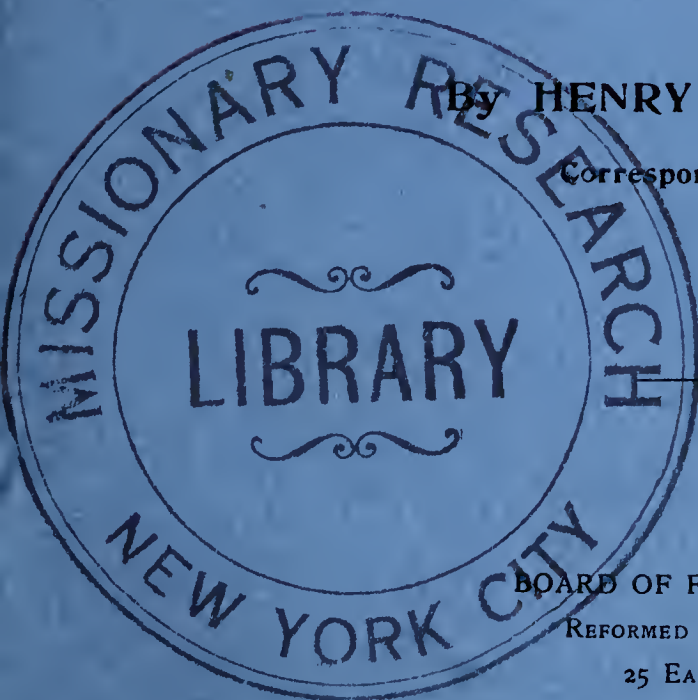
1796-1896

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(Statistics to May, 1900.)

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Corresponding Secretary



BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

REFORMED CHURCH BUILDING

25 EAST 22d Street

New York



# A CENTURY OF MISSIONS IN OUR REFORMED CHURCHES: 1796-1896.

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## I. ORIGINAL MOVEMENTS.

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IT is quite proper to celebrate the completion of a century of missionary activity on the part of the Reformed Church.

Its own Board was not organized till 1832. But long previous to that time its members had united with those of other churches in evangelistic labors and organizations.

**New York  
Missionary  
Society, 1796.**

In November, 1796, just a century ago, the New York Missionary Society was organized in New York City. In it were represented the Baptist, Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. Monthly meetings were held on the second Wednesday of each month, in the Baptist, Dutch and Presbyterian churches in rotation, "for the purpose of offering their prayers to the God of grace, that He would be pleased to pour out His Spirit on His Church, *and send His Gospel to all the nations.*" This society opened correspondence with similar societies in Great Britain and received replies from several of them. It was no doubt due to the example set by the society that the Northern Missionary Society was formed at Lansingburgh, N. Y., a few months later. In this the same denominations were represented.

**Objects.**

The immediate object of these societies was to send out and support preachers among the various tribes of American Indians. The New York society also undertook to educate proper persons to be sent out as missionaries. Neither of them seems to have aimed to extend its operations to the great heathen world beyond.

The first missionary, the Rev. Joseph Bullen, **Missionaries.** of Vermont, was sent to the Chickasaws of Georgia, and others to the Stockbridge Indians of Connecticut, the Indians of Suffolk County, Long Island, and the Tuscaroras and Senecas of Western New York. In 1800 the *New York Missionary Magazine* was established, and in it reports were given of the operations of the society, with letters from the missionaries, as well as accounts of the work of the London Missionary Society and others. It was issued for four years and then discontinued for lack of support.

In November, 1797, Dr. John M. Mason **Influential Sermons.** preached his famous sermon entitled, "Messiah's Throne," before the New York society in the Presbyterian Church on Wall street. The audience is described as "crowded, attentive and serious, and the collection made after the sermon was large, and did great honor to the liberality of the citizens of New York." This sermon, as also one by Dr. John H. Livingston, almost equally famous, preached in April, 1799, before the same society, entitled, "Christ is all in all," was afterward widely published. A similar, and perhaps more eloquent, sermon was preached by Dr. Livingston before the same society in 1804, entitled, "The Everlasting Gospel." These did much to awaken, extend and perpetuate a missionary spirit among the churches. The last is believed to have been reprinted and widely circulated by Samuel J. Mills, and so to have contributed to the creation of that spirit which resulted in the formation of the American Board.

Both of the societies mentioned were entirely voluntary in their character. They had, I believe, no formal ecclesiastical sanction whatever. The missions and property of the New York society were handed over to the United Missionary Society in 1821. The Northern continued its operations some years later.

**Missions in General Synod,** The first distinct reference to foreign Missions in the proceedings of the General Synod, occurs in the Minutes of June, 1816. **1816.**

The Synod had, indeed, in 1789, appointed "a Commission to engage, upon reasonable and Christian terms, one or more missionaries to visit those who



are dispersed upon the outskirts of our land." So early as 1800 the attention of this Commission and the Synod was directed to Canada as a hopeful field of missionary effort, and missionaries were sent thither. These efforts, however, were not directed to the Indians of this country or Canada. In them lay, no doubt, the germ of our Board of Domestic Missions. But, taken in connection with what has been already said, they serve to show that the missionary spirit was becoming active in the Church.

**United  
Missionary  
Society, 1816.**

In 1816 an invitation was received from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church by the General Synod "to appoint commissioners to meet commissioners of the General Assembly, for the purpose of arranging a plan for the formation of a Society for Foreign Missions." Seven commissioners were appointed, five ministers and two elders. The result of their deliberations was the formation of the United Missionary Society, "composed of the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed and Associate Reformed Churches, and all others who may choose to join with them." The Constitution of the new society was submitted to the General Synod in 1817. The object stated therein was "To spread the Gospel among the Indians of North America, the inhabitants of Mexico and South America, and in other portions of the heathen and anti-Christian world." Missionaries were to be "elected from the three Churches indiscriminately," and an annual report to be made to the highest judicatory of the three denominations for their information. The constitution was approved by Synod, and it was "recommended to all ministers and churches to give the measure their active support." A committee was also appointed, consisting of Dr. Philip Milledoler and Elder Stephen Van Rensselaer, to meet with other committees for the purpose of carrying the plan into execution. Thus was the Reformed Dutch Church, for the first time in this country, formally committed to the work of executing the high commission of her Lord and Head.

In 1818 the above recommendation was earnestly renewed, and it was also resolved that, "at some convenient time during

the session of every Synod, a missionary sermon be preached before Synod and a collection be taken for missionary purposes." This excellent provision continued in force until 1860, though the "collection" seems to have lapsed at an earlier period, and many of the most eminent names in the ministry of the Church are found in the list of preachers.

In 1826 two important acts were proposed :

**Amalgamated with American Board, 1826.** 1. Consenting to the amalgamation of the United Missionary Society with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This was accomplished and the

United Society ceased to exist.

2. Recommending to the Missionary Board of the Church, which had been hitherto wholly domestic in its operations, "to consider the propriety of taking measures to begin missionary operations among the aborigines of our own country and elsewhere." Gentle as was this latter recommendation, and sanctioned by the course of other churches, it seems to have frightened some in the Church who afterwards became leaders in the cause of Foreign Missions.

The Committee of 1827 reported : "Your Committee are not aware what considerations led the last Synod to recommend a Foreign Mission by our Church in her individual capacity. Yet as it has been recommended, as the Board has made progress in preparatory steps, and it has gone before the churches, they feel themselves to be so delicately situated as to be unable to suggest any measures in relation to it, though as a Committee they consider it matter of *very doubtful expediency*."

**Causes  
of Growing  
Interest.**

It is not difficult, now, to perceive what the reasons were which moved some in the Church to propose action of such "doubtful expediency." The earlier missions of the American Board had been successfully established ; through the baptism of Judson and Rice the great Baptist denomination had become interested in Foreign Missions and the Baptist Missionary Union organized ; the life and death of Harriet Newell, the character, remarkable career and heroic sufferings of Mr. and Mrs. Judson ;—these and

many other influences had awakened a widespread interest in the subject throughout all the churches. Added to this the departure of Dr. John Scudder for Ceylon, in 1819, his letters and addresses, may easily be supposed to have quickened the faith and zeal of many in the Church to which he belonged, and to have suggested the idea of a distinct call to and responsibility for such work which could only be met by effort "in her individual capacity." The spirit that would finally lead to such effort was present and growing.

In 1829 the Rev. David Abeel sailed for China as a chaplain of the American Seamen's Friend's Society. In 1830 he became a missionary of the American Board in Java. He travelled much, in the Indian Archipelago and elsewhere, seeking hopeful fields of labor. His character and work increased the interest already existing. In 1831 the Committee on Missions reported to the General Synod: "We believe the time is not far distant when it (a Foreign Mission) may be undertaken with good prospect of success. But the committee are of the opinion that the time has not yet arrived." It was probably nearer than this Committee were ready to believe.

The Minutes of the Particular Synod of New York for 1832 contained "a recommendation of the subject of Foreign Missions to the immediate and prayerful consideration of the General Synod." A similar recommendation was found in the Minutes of the Particular Synod of Albany. As these were the only Synods at that time, it was manifest that the entire Church was, to a greater or less extent, awakened to the importance of this subject. The statement of reasons for such action presented by the Synod of New York could hardly be improved, even at this day of missionary zeal and progress, but they cannot be given here.

To these recommendations the General Synod wisely listened. A committee was appointed at its session in June for the purpose of conferring with the American Board, and in the hope that such a connection might be formed with it "as would enable us to maintain a foreign mission of our own and at the same time avail ourselves of all their

**Board of the  
R. P. D. Church  
1832.**



experience." The proposition was cordially received by that body, and at the October session of the Synod the Committee were able to report a plan of co-operation with it. The plan was approved and adopted by the Synod. A Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Dutch Church, consisting of fifteen members, was appointed, and the whole subject was "affectionately recommended to the churches and ministers under the care of the Synod, and their prayers and exertions for the promotion and success of Foreign Missions earnestly solicited."

## II. PERIOD OF COOPERATION.

### **Original Members.**

As organized in 1832, the Board of Foreign Missions consisted of fifteen members, nine ministers and six laymen. They were among the most honored representatives of the Church,—Drs. Knox, McMurray, De Witt, Ludlow, Matthews, Ferris; Revs. Strong, Gosman and Dubois; Messrs. Peter D. Vroom, Isaac Young, Wm. R. Thompson, J. V. B. Varick, John D. Keese and Jeremiah Johnson.

Under the agreement with the American Board, the contributions of our churches were allowed "to flow into our own treasury, to be appropriated through the medium of the American Board to missionaries from our own Church, or to such missionaries and such objects as may be specially selected and approved." Missionaries approved by our Board were to be recommended to and accepted by the Prudential Committee, and the conduct of the Missions was to be left in the hands of that Committee. Thus the new Board was to have all the advantage of the experience and facilities of the older.

### **First Missionaries.**

The American Board, as has been seen, already numbered among its missionaries two honored sons of the Dutch Church, the Rev. John Scudder, M.D., at Panditeripo, Ceylon, and the Rev. David Abeel, D. D. Dr. Scudder was a member of the Franklin Street Church when, in 1819, he left this country for Ceylon as a medical missionary. He had afterwards been ordained by brethren in the field, and had been remarkably successful both as preacher and physician. Dr. Abeel had



been educated in our Theological Seminary and pastor of the church at Athens, N. Y. Going to China in 1829 as a Chaplain of the Seamen's Friends' Society, he entered the service of the American Board at Canton in 1830, and under its direction had voyaged extensively in the Indian Archipelago and to Siam, in search of suitable openings for mission work.

One of the first steps taken by the new Board, after its organization, was formally to take, in April, 1833, these two brethren "under its patronage." A letter addressed to the ministers of the Reformed Dutch Church, calling their attention to "the state of the heathen in these parts," was shortly after received from Dr. Scudder and published by order of the Board. By its direction, also, Dr. Livingston's great sermon, preached in 1804 and entitled "The Everlasting Gospel", was republished and widely circulated. Dr. Abeel was invited to return to this country and present the cause of Missions among the churches. The interest thus fostered grew apace, and the Board soon felt warranted in attempting to establish a new Mission, to be manned entirely by the Church and supported by it.

For such an enterprise the way soon opened.

**Mission to** The islands of Netherlands India—the  
**Borneo, 1836.** Dutch East Indies—were represented by Dr.

Abeel as offering most "delightful opportunities" for such a Mission. It was hoped that some special advantages might accrue to it if established under the Dutch government by missionaries of this Church. Dr. Abeel was therefore requested by the Board to visit Holland, on his way home, and ascertain how far it might be desirable and practicable to cooperate with the Netherlands Missionary Society in the islands of Java, Borneo, Sumatra, etc. Out of this grew the Mission to Borneo.

Four missionaries, Revs. Jacob Ennis, Elihu Doty, Elbert Nevius and William Youngblood, with their wives, and Miss Condict, a sister of Mrs. Nevius, formed the first party. They had, before their departure, circulated freely among the churches and by their addresses greatly stimulated missionary zeal. The Classis of Poughkeepsie, the Missionary Society of the Broome Street Church of New York, and the First Church of Philadel-

phia, of which Dr. Bethune was pastor, all offered to support missionaries of their own, the last named choosing Mr. and Mrs. Nevius. The party sailed during the session of the General Synod of 1836. Additions were made in 1838, 1840 and 1842. In all nine missionaries were sent out, all but two being married, together with Miss Conduct.

**Discontinued**  
**1849.**

But the hope of advantage from locating under the Dutch government proved delusive. The opening of China in 1842 seemed to offer larger opportunities, and Messrs. Doty and Pohlman were sent to Amoy in 1844. The Mission was reduced in 1849, by sickness and death, to a single member, the Rev. Wm. H. Steele. He was then recalled to this country for the benefit of his health and to seek reinforcements. All efforts in this direction failed, and this first mission was abandoned. Of its missionaries one still survives, the Rev Wm. H. Steele, D. D., afterward for fourteen years the President of the Board.

The disappointment felt at the failure of this Mission would probably have been more keen had not a second been already established, with far brighter prospects of success.

**Amoy Mission,**  
**China, 1842.**

The close of the "Opium War," by which five ports in China were opened to foreign trade and residence in 1842, found Dr. Abeel at Macao. He immediately proceeded to Amoy and established himself on the island of Kolongsu, then in possession of British troops, and opposite the city of Amoy. There he was joined, in 1844, by Messrs. Doty and Pohlman from Borneo, where their labors had been chiefly directed toward Chinese settlers. The first converts, two old men, were baptized by Mr. Pohlman in 1846. The first church building erected by Protestants at Amoy, "probably the first in China for Chinese worshippers only," was built by him with funds obtained from this country, and still stands in the heart of the city as his monument.

In 1851, a church had been gathered of eleven members. This was completely organized by the setting apart of elders and deacons in 1856. In 1857, the Mission and its missionaries,

with their full and hearty concurrence, were handed over by the American Board to the independent care and control of the reorganized Board of the Reformed Dutch Church.

In 1847, the Board was invited, by the Prudential Committee of the American Board, **Arcot Missions India, 1853.** "to consider the expediency of undertaking a Mission among the Tamil-speaking people of southern India, and in the neighborhood of its Madras Mission, to be composed entirely of missionaries from the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church." Dr. Scudder had been transferred from Ceylon to Madras in 1836, and had made extended tours through the regions lying west and south, preaching the Gospel to great multitudes, distributing tracts, and healing the sick. In this work he had been joined, in 1846, by his eldest son, Henry Martyn. A wide and open field had been developed by their labors, and to it the attention of the Board was now directed. On November 9th the Board resolved that the establishment of such a Mission would be expedient. In 1850, Henry Martyn Scudder removed to Arcot, where he was joined, in 1852, by his brother William from Ceylon, and a second brother Joseph from America. In 1853, the Mission was constituted, and in 1854 the Classis of Arcot was organized. The stations of Arcot, Arni, Chittoor, Coonoor and Vellore were all occupied before 1857. In that year this Mission also, with its missionaries, was surrendered to the independent Board of the Reformed Dutch Church, of which they were sons and ministers.

It is impossible, in the space allowed, to give, even in briefest outline, the history of the two Missions thus adopted by the Church as her own. But their growth during the more than forty years that have supervened shows how richly they have been blessed of God and have rewarded the faith and benevolence of the Church that claimed them for its own and took them under its fostering care.

**Opposing Tendencies.** The arrangement entered into with the American Board, continued in operation, with uninterrupted harmony and mutual satisfaction to the two Boards, until 1857. The interest and contributions of the Reformed Dutch Churches



were concentrated on the Missions in India and China. The missionaries were all from their membership, and naturally looked to the Dutch Church for their support and that of their work. Other churches, of other denominations, also cooperated with the American Board. The fond dream of many—of one national, undenominational agency for the prosecution of Foreign Missions—was still cherished. There seemed nothing in the constitution, or in the conduct, of the American Board to prevent the indefinite continuance and enlargement of such cooperation.

It was a fact, however, that union with so large a body of Christians and churches contributing to the American Board, seemed in a measure to relieve the cooperating denomination of a sense of responsibility, since its deficiencies could be and sometimes were made up from other sources, though on the whole our churches contributed much more than the amounts expended on those Missions. There were many, therefore, and in increasing numbers, who were convinced that greater things would be done, and the entire Church roused to a deeper sense of responsibility, if its missionary work should be conducted independently by a Board of its own. They therefore desired the termination of the relations with the American Board which had existed harmoniously for twenty-five years, and the institution of a distinct organization.

**Independent  
Action  
Proposed.  
1856.**

For such independent action the time was ripe, and the pressure at length became too strong to be resisted. In 1856, the Board of Foreign Missions, thoroughly convinced of the wisdom and desirability of such a step, unanimously recommended "that the General Synod conduct their Foreign Missions in an independent manner." An exceedingly able report from the pen of Dr. Isaac Ferris, its President, presented with great force the reasons for such a proposition. But the Synod was not then ready to take action, and the whole subject was referred to the next General Synod.

**Separation  
Accomplished  
1857.**

This step was taken in 1857. The General Synod of that year met at Ithaca, and received from the hand of the late Dr. Chambers, as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Missions, a convincing and masterly report in advocacy of such separation, and elaborating the reasons for it adduced by Dr. Ferris. The discussions were earnest, elevated and of a highly spiritual tone. The Holy Spirit's presence was distinctly manifested, and under His guidance this course was resolved upon, though not without dissent from those who thought the time had not yet come, or clung with affection to the Board with which, and its work, they had been so long and happily associated. A committee was appointed to negotiate for a separation. A satisfactory agreement was arrived at and the two Boards parted company with mutual expressions of regard, gratitude for the past and hope for the future. The history of the Board and its Missions, in succeeding years, shows how amply, in the providence of God, the hopes of that day have been realized, and the wisdom vindicated.

**Comparison  
1832-57.**

A simple comparison may here be introduced, to show how the Church and its benevolence toward Foreign Missions had increased during the twenty-five years of cooperative action. In 1832, when the first organization was accomplished, the Reformed Dutch Church reported 15,800 families and 20,222 communicants. From December, 1832, to May, 1833, these gave for Foreign Missions \$2,106.12 1-2. In 1857 the number of families was 32,579 and of communicants 44,443. The contributions for Foreign Missions for the year were \$12,303.99, and for the whole period, \$245,469. Seventeen missionaries, fifteen wives, and one unmarried woman, thirty-three in all, had been sent to Borneo, China, and India.

## III. PERIOD OF INDEPENDENT ACTION.

**The Board Reconstituted.** The Board was reorganized by the addition of nine members, making twenty-four in all, and was incorporated by the Legislature of New York in 1860. The Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen was elected President, Dr. Isaac Ferris, Corresponding Secretary, and Mr. Ezra A. Hayt, Treasurer. The entire support of the Amoy and Arcot Missions was at once assumed, and it was unanimously agreed, informally, in February, 1858, "that the committee feel themselves bound to take the responsibility to send any qualified young men who might offer themselves for this work."

**Opening in Japan.** The sincerity of this pledge was soon put to the test. In January of the following year the Board received "an intensely interesting letter" from the Rev. E. W. Syle, relative to the commencement of a Mission to Japan. Similar letters were received from Dr. S. Wells Williams, as well as from other sources. The brethren named, both missionaries in China, had agreed, while on a visit to Nagasaki, to write letters to the Boards of the Presbyterian, Episcopal and Reformed Churches of this country, urging them to send missionaries to Japan. The matter was taken under serious consideration by the Board, especially for the reason that, owing to privileges long extended by the Japanese to the Dutch at Nagasaki, and the intercourse maintained with them, it was urged and might be hoped that missionaries from the Reformed Dutch Church would be received, if not with special favor yet with less disfavor than those of other churches. Yet, so far as the Board knew or could see, there were neither men nor means for the undertaking.

**Remarkable Providences.** The way was opened, in the providence of God, in a remarkable manner. In January, 1859, the Rev. S. R. Brown, formerly manager of the Morrison Chinese School at Canton, but at that time pastor of the Church at Owasco Outlet, offered his services to go to Japan with his wife and daughter. At the same meeting a letter was read from Mr. Thomas C. Doremus, an elder in the South Church, New York, offering to



sustain a missionary in Japan for a period of five years. Another gentleman in the same church offered to sustain another missionary for the same period in the same country. The latter lived long enough to bless God for the wonderful results of missionary work in Japan for which his far sighted liberality helped to prepare the way. The church itself, also, to which these gentlemen belonged, agreed to maintain a third missionary. Small wonder that it was immediately resolved "that this Committee will forthwith commence the establishment of a Mission in Japan."

**Mission to Japan, 1859.** In May, 1859, the first missionaries sailed. The party consisted of Dr. Brown, with his wife and daughter, the Rev. G. F. Verbeck and D. B. Simmons. M.D., and their wives.

Drs. Brown and Simmons proceeded to Kanagawa, near the city (then a village) of Yokohama, and Dr. Verbeck to Nagasaki. Similar companies were sent from the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches, and all arrived in Japan within a very few months of each other. Into the history of the Mission thus established, and divided into two—the North and South Japan Missions—in 1889, it is impossible to enter here.

For many years these three continued to be the only Missions under the care of the Board, though opportunities and invitations were not wanting to engage in missionary enterprises elsewhere. Many of them were most inviting in their character, but, with two exceptions, the Board has felt compelled to decline them all, through lack of means to incur additional responsibility and, at the same time meet its obligations to the Missions already under its care. As these are a part of its history, it may be of interest briefly to mention some of these opportunities offered to and declined by the Board.

**South Africa, 1858.** So early as in 1858 an application was received from the Rev. Andrew Murray, of South Africa, to furnish the Mission (of the Netherlands) there with missionaries from the Dutch Church in this country, to aid them in their work. Two years later the Rev. Daniel Lindley, a missionary of the A. B. C. F. M. to the Zulus of Southeastern Africa, presented in

person a similar request, with "interesting statements touching the condition and needs of the Dutch churches in that region" (Natal). In neither case was the Board able to give a favorable response.

**Missionary  
Ship, 1864.**

In the winter and spring of 1864 there occurred a remarkable "outburst of zeal for missionary labor on a grand scale" among the churches in the Classes of Holland and Wisconsin. Africa was to be the objective point of the new missionary movement. A brother, then a licentiate, now and for long years highly honored in the ministry of the Church, offered himself and was ordained for the service. A plan was formed, and strongly favored by Dr. Van Raalte and others of influence, for the building of a ship that would reach the ocean through the Welland Canal, and convey missionaries, etc., to and from the field. The General Synod, in June, 1894, by formal resolution, expressed its pleasure and devout thanksgiving to Almighty God for this determination, and commended the enterprise to the liberality of the churches. A model was procured in New York, and the keel of the projected ship was laid at Holland, Mich., on June 24, 1864, amid much enthusiasm and appropriate religious exercises, in which the Corresponding Secretary of the Board, the Rev. Philip Peltz, D. D., and Dr. J. V. N. Talmage, of the Amoy Mission, participated. The ship was never built. The keel, laid with such enthusiasm, was allowed to rot. Nothing material appeared permanently to result from this movement, though considerable contributions found their way into the treasury of the Board. But there can be no doubt—there is none in the minds of those best conversant with the facts—that a mighty spiritual and missionary influence was exerted among our Holland brethren, the effects of which are visible to this day.

**Japanese  
Students,  
1866.**

It would be unjust to pass over, in such a record as this, the connection of this Board with the education of young Japanese students in this country. Two young men presented themselves in the office of the Board, in 1866, to Dr. Ferris, then Corresponding Secretary. They

brought letters of introduction from Dr. Verbeck, stating that "they were of good family and worthy of attention." They had come at the peril of their lives, and brought \$100. They said they had come to "learn navigation, and how to make big ships and big guns." The matter was laid before the Board by Dr. Ferris and the support and care of the young men assumed until word could be had from Japan. This was the beginning of a great movement. About 500 Japanese students, within a few years, entered the schools of the United States. Of these, more than 200 passed through the office of the Board.

Much interest was awakened at a meeting of the Executive Committee in August, 1870, by the presence of two Mexicans with an interpreter. Interesting statements were made by them concerning a work in progress for six years in the City of Mexico and its vicinity. More than forty congregations had been gathered, averaging forty souls. They had separated from the Roman Church, and conducted their worship after the pattern of the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting. They sought to be taken under the care of the Board. The question of thus beginning a new Mission in Mexico was held under advisement for several months, but the Board being heavily in debt, with no prospect of relief, the proposition was ultimately declined.

In 1870, in common with other similar societies, the Board accepted the invitation of the general government to nominate agents among the Indian tribes of the West, in pursuance of what was styled "General Grant's Quaker policy." The Government agreed to appoint and pay the agents so nominated, the Boards "to advise the agent, superintend his work as far as possible, and to send out and maintain Christian school teachers and missionaries." The Pima and Maricopa Agency, having 5,000 Indians, and the Colorado River Agency, having some 23,000 altogether, were offered to and accepted by the Board. The plan worked with measurable but diminishing satisfaction for some years. Difficulties arose which were found to be insuperable, and, in October, 1880, the Board formally withdrew "from all co-operation with the government."



In 1884, the recent opening of Korea was drawing to the "Hermit Kingdom" the eyes of those who desired the evangelization of its people and longed to attempt it. One such, a graduate of our Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, (the Rev. Horace G. Underwood,) made application to the Board, in February of that year, to be sent thither as a missionary of the Board. But it was not deemed either expedient or even possible to establish a new Mission at that time, even by the appointment of a single missionary. The application was, therefore, reluctantly declined, and Mr. Underwood cordially recommended to the Presbyterian Board, which was known to be considering the establishment of such a Mission. The Reformed Church has reason to rejoice in the work he has been permitted to do in that field, though unable to send him forth to it herself.

**Korea, 1884.** The same subject was brought before the Board again in January, 1891. In that month a proposition was received from a gentleman of known liberality in the city of New York to furnish the sum of \$5,000, "on condition and for the purpose of establishing a Mission of the Reformed Church in Korea." But, aside from the fact that other churches already had flourishing missions in that country, the claims of its existing missions were too great, and were too scantily met, to admit of its undertaking this new responsibility. The proposition was therefore necessarily though reluctantly declined.

**Arabian Mission, 1889.** Similar reasons delayed the assumption by the Board of the Arabian Mission. In 1889, just before the meeting of the General Synod in June, Prof. J. G. Lansing, of our Theological Seminary in New Brunswick, appeared before a special meeting of the Board, together with three students of the Seminary—Messrs. Cantine, S. M. Zwemer and Phelps. Their desire was to establish a mission among some Arabic-speaking people, with special reference to Moslems and slaves. Their personal presentation of the matter, accompanied as it was by the offer of their own services, was listened to with profound interest and sympathy by the members of the Board

who were present. The whole matter was referred to the General Synod, where it was received with interest equally profound. Though it was evidently the desire of the Synod that it should do so, the Board, to whom the subject was referred back, did not then see the way clear to incur the responsibility of a new mission at that time. Nor was it till 1894 that, in accordance with the strong desire of many throughout the Church, and by direction of the General Synod itself, the Board accepted the management of the Mission already established and in good working order.

**Comparative Statement, 1858-1896.** Three missionaries and their wives, seven catechists, two churches and two parochial schools, were received at Amoy from the A. B. C. F. M. in 1859. With the Arcot

Mission were received five missionaries and their wives, and one unmarried lady; five churches, with 117 communicants, five native helpers, eight schoolmasters and four colporteurs. The following table shows the increase God has given up to January, 1900:

**Comparative, Summary, 1858-1900.**

	1858	1868	1878	1888	1898	1900
Stations, . . . . .	6	10	11	11	22	23
Out-Stations and Preaching Places, . . . . .	2	18	49	123	241	230
Missionaries, men, . . . . .	8	14	16	28	36	35
Missionaries, married women, . . . . .	6	12	14	21	31	31
Missionaries, unmarried women, . . . . .	1	....	7	9	20	26
Native Ordained Ministers, . . . . .	....	4	6	26	30	31
Other Native Helpers, men, . . . . .	22	76	86	173	211	237
Native Helpers, women, . . . . .	....	2	10	47	41	112
Churches, . . . . .	7	13	31	47	47	39
Communicants, . . . . .	297	816	1,563	4,559	5,564	4,597
Boarding School, boys, . . . . .	....	2	1	7	10	10
Scholars, . . . . .	....	55	40	308	517	577
Boarding School, girls, . . . . .	....	1	3	5	10	10
Scholars, . . . . .	....	46	97	300	456	451
Theological Students, . . . . .	....	7	19	32	61	50
Day Schools, . . . . .	6	17	44	106	201	163
Scholars, . . . . .	88	413	1,341	2,162	6,059	5,715
Hospitals and Dispensaries, . . . . .	....	1	1	....	4	6
Patients Treated, . . . . .	....	15,507	9,673	....	18,046	26,622
Native Contributions, . . . . .	....	\$1,134	\$1,590	\$8,325	\$10,758	\$11,136

The whole number of missionaries connected with the Board from the beginning is 196. Of these 82 were men, 71 married and 43 unmarried women. Of the total number, 17 went to the Borneo Mission, 51 to China, 58 to India, 57 to Japan, and 13 to Arabia.

In no particular has the growth been greater **Woman's Work** or more marked than in that of work for **for Women.** women in our mission fields. And any sketch, however slight, of the Board's history, would be fatally defective that did not make mention of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions. Dr. Abeel, returning from China in 1834, visited London, and so interested Christian women there in the condition of women in the Far East that the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East was organized the following year. In 1861 the Woman's Union Missionary Society of America for Heathen Lands was organized in New York, chiefly through the efforts and zeal of Mrs. Thomas C. Doremus, a member of the Reformed Church, who became its first President. In June, 1871, the Board directed its Corresponding Secretary "to prepare a Constitution for Woman's Societies Auxiliary to this Board."

It was not till January, 1875, however, that **Woman's Board, 1875.** the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of our Church was organized. In that month a few earnest souls met in New York, in the midst of storm and rain, and established this Board which, for twenty-one years, has been the invaluable and indispensable helper of Synod's Board. Its efforts were immediately directed to the formation of Auxiliaries and Mission Bands in the several churches, and as the result of continuous labor, it was able to report in June, 1900, the existence of 569 such auxiliaries. In 1880, when the Board was hard pressed financially, it assumed the support of all the work for women and girls in all our mission fields. That responsibility it still cheerfully assumes, though the cost has increased from about \$5,500 to more than \$30,000 per year. Its special contributions, also, for the erection of schools, chapels, dwellings, etc., have been many and generous, amounting to many thousands of dollars. The total of its receipts, from the beginning, is \$498,479, to May, 1900. In 1899 it received from Mr. Robert Schell of New York, a donation of \$10,000 for the building and equipment of the Mary Taber Schell Hospital for women, at Vellore, India. In January, 1900, its Twenty-fifth anniversary was celebrated with appropriate religious services and a Birthday Reception.



**Finances.** The financial history of the Board has been characterized by three principal features :

1. Constant pressure and difficulty, amounting often to extremity. 2. Signal deliverances. 3. Steady growth in receipts, through the growing interest and liberality of the Church.

**Pressure.** It would be amusing if it were not so painful to note, in the records of its meetings, how often the evidences of embarrassment and sometimes desperate straits appear ; how often appeals were ordered to the churches, showing " the immediate and pressing wants of the Board,"—how often, too, " the contraction of its work," " the giving up of a Mission," and even " the recall of a sufficient number of missionaries from the field," have been presented as the only and sad alternative.

**Relief.** But side by side with these gloomy passages, like gleams of light appear the notices of help received, often in ways totally unexpected and of a character to fill the heart with gratitude and wonder. During the dark days of the civil war, perhaps the darkest the Board has ever seen, there are gleams like these : In 1862 the London Missionary Society offered £200 for that and the following year, for the salary of Dr. Jared W. Scudder. In 1863 the English Presbyterian Committee placed £2,000 at the service of the Amoy Mission, " in case of any special need arising out of our civil troubles." Even the native Christians in India came to the help of the Board in 1862 and pledged \$800 for the return of Dr. Jared Scudder.

When in 1866 the Board found itself oppressed and overwhelmed by a debt of \$47,000, and anxious meetings were held to consider expedients for relief, one of those meetings " was electrified by the announcement by Dr. T. W. Chambers that a member of the Collegiate Church, (Mr. Warren Ackerman), had that morning engaged to give \$46,500 to remove the debt of the Board, and \$10,000 to be invested for the support of the Missions in the future." Prayer was turned to praise- -thanksgiving to God and thanks to the generous giver. The tidings were received with tears of thankful joy in India and China.

In 1880 a debt of almost equal amount had accumulated. A General Missionary Conference (the first of the kind), was held in Poughkeepsie, at which the state of each Mission and of the treasury was presented in carefully prepared papers. It proved to be an occasion of thrilling interest. A committee was appointed, with the late Dr. Chambers as chairman, by which the amount of the debt was raised and the Board again relieved of its heavy and discouraging burden. More recently, in 1892, and still later, in 1895, debts of nearly equal amount have been raised through the instrumentality of committees appointed by the General Synod and the liberality of the Church.

**Progress.** Notwithstanding these recurring debts,—due largely in the first instance to the disturbed state of the currency during the war for the Union, and subsequently to the rapid growth of the Missions, outstripping the ability of the Board to keep pace with it,—there has been a continued, if not uniform, growth in the contributions of the Church for its Foreign Mission work. The receipts of the Board during the first decade of independent action, from 1858-67, were \$469,057 ; from 1868-77, \$644,572 ; from 1878-87, \$745,428 ; from 1888-97, \$1,150,197, and from 1898-1900, \$361,369. During the whole period, and including about \$45,000 raised in 1888 by Dr. Chamberlain for the Theological Seminary in the Arcot Mission, the Board has received \$3,415,939. Adding the amount given during the period of co-operation with the A. B. C. F. M., \$245,469, the total sum of \$3,661,408 is the contribution of the Church in sixty-five years to this work, beside about \$49,000 for the Arabian Mission, chiefly from its own members. As Dr. Ferris said at Albany in 1881 ; “The Church has sustained its Missions with a noble liberality, God has given his people a willing mind.”

As we face a new century of effort and prayer, may we not hope that all the former things will be as nothing when compared with the far greater things the Lord will enable us to do, in this thrice blessed service for His glory and the redemption of mankind.





